

Bronx VA Medical Center
Patient Handbook

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Produced by the Education & Information Management Service Center

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Introduction

Welcome to the Bronx Veterans Affairs Medical Center. Our Medical Center provides quality care, with respect and courtesy, to all those who served in the United States Armed Forces, and has been discharged under honorable conditions. Service time may be in peacetime or in conflict.

The Bronx VA Medical Center is a modern tertiary care facility, comprised of a 214-bed hospital, and a 112 bed Extended Care Facility. The Medical Center offers an integrated team approach on an inpatient as well as outpatient setting. These services cover a wide range of acute medical, surgical, psychiatric and rehabilitative services.

The Mission of the Bronx Veterans Affairs Medical Center is to provide the highest quality of healthcare to our veterans. We strive to meet our veteran's current and future needs by providing state of the art healthcare, education, and research. Our vision is that the Bronx VA will be known for the outstanding services we provide, our compassion for our veterans, our collaborations with the communities that we serve, and our education and research initiatives.

This handbook provides information to help you and your family to participate in making choices for your care and recovery. If you have concerns about how we may better meet your individual healthcare needs or enhance our services; please do not hesitate to share these with us.

MARYANN MUSUMECI
Medical Center Director

Admission Procedures

Admission Day

Upon admission, an integrated professional team develops an individualized plan of care. Teams consist of medical/surgical doctors, registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, nursing assistants, patient care associates, dietitians, pharmacists, social workers, case managers, therapists and medical assistants when needed. The Bronx VA has assembled health care professionals all trained in the latest technology. Our attending MD's are senior members on the faculty of Mt. Sinai and Hospital for Special Surgery. Equally important to our teams medical expertise is the emphasis placed upon the individualized care and respect for each of our veterans. At this time, you as the patient need to know the names of your team members. If necessary, ask them to write their names for you. The patient is the center of the team and an active voice in treatment choices and recovery.

Admission Assessment

Your team doctor will meet with you to go over your past and present medical history and complete a physical examination. At the end he will discuss any need for additional diagnostic tests and/or procedures to help clarify your present condition. The registered nurse also does a needs assessment at this time. This will develop into your integrated plan. During this interview you will be asked if you are interested in knowing more about "Advance Directives" and if you are interested in completing one. Here you will have the opportunity to state your instructions for health care in advance should you lose the ability to communicate your wishes. You are encouraged to seek support from your family, social worker and clergy or other team members.

Your Unit

You will be given a brief orientation to the unit and your room. You will be asked to deposit cash, checks and other valuables with the agent cashier. You may withdraw at will any items or funds Monday - Friday 8:00am - 12:00pm and 1:00pm to 4:00pm. At this time you are responsible for the withdrawal. The maximum amount of any withdrawal is \$600. Most rooms on the unit have two to four beds and bedside stands, small lockers for your personal belongings, a sink, toilet, and shower facilities.

Each unit has a patient day room where you may socialize with other patients or family.
SMOKING IS NOT PERMITTED ON THE UNIT.

To contact the staff for assistance, just press the Intercom call button by your bed. Someone will come to your room or speak to you through the Intercom.

Bedside telephones are available from 7:00am - 9:00pm, local calls are free. Long distance calls must be placed through the operator and charged to a credit card or collect.

Unit Routines

Our goal is to provide quality care in a courteous but timely manner. For your safety, we need to know where you are at all times. You are expected to remain on your unit unless your doctor has written approval for you to temporarily leave the unit.

- A. It is especially important for you to be at your bedside when bloods are drawn, doctors make rounds, meals are served, and medications or treatments are given. The nurses will tell you when these routines are carried out. You also need to be available to keep special appointments for X-rays, diagnostic or treatment procedures in other areas of the medical center.
- B. For safety and infection control reasons, you will not be permitted to leave the unit alone

if you have an IV running, wear a mask, or have dressings or drainage bags.

- C. You will be encouraged to maintain your self-care abilities. The nursing staff will assist if you require help.
- D. You will be encouraged to have rest periods as part of your treatment, and to participate in other helpful activities such as group meetings, recreation, and patient education. Please be at your bedside by 10:00pm, and remember to turn out lights at a reasonable time so that other patients are not disturbed.
- E. Please bring a list of all those medications you take at home. If necessary have someone help you, or bring the actual bottles with you so we have an accurate list of your medications, including over-the-counter and herbal medicines.
- F. Your diet is also a planned part of your treatment. Please be at your bedside at mealtimes to receive your tray. You will not be served in the canteen. No food should be brought into the medical center for you without your doctor's or dietitian's approval.
- G. The staff of each unit is eager to keep your environment neat and clean and promote an atmosphere of wellness. We need your cooperation. Please tell the staff about wet spills or broken equipment that could cause accidents. Please don't litter anywhere on the medical center grounds.

Discharge Procedures

Planning for your discharge begins early in your hospital stay. Your doctors, registered nurses, case manager, and social worker will work with you, and your family in making the transition from hospital to home and continued recovery.

Discharge Instructions

Your team has made an educational discharge plan based on patient and family needs. The discharge plan includes education to:

- Improve patient health toward recovery and overall well-being.
- Teach patients the correct way to take medications.
- Have patients demonstrate the correct use of prosthetic equipment.
- Information on potential food and drug interactions specific to illness.
- Alert patients about further treatment and rehabilitation techniques.
- Follow your diet plan.
- Provide discharge instructions to home care providers if necessary.
- Provide scheduled follow up appointments with primary care doctor and specialist if necessary.
- Inform patient about sign and symptoms that need emergency treatment.
- 24-hour telephone care by calling 1-800-877-6976

The discharge plan will be given to the patient or patient's family on leaving the unit.

Nutrition Counseling

A dietitian or diet technician will meet with you shortly after admission to determine if you need any special instruction on your diet prior to discharge. The effects your medications might have on your diet will also be addressed. Any referrals you might need for nutrition clinic or for nutrition classes for weight control, diabetes, or cholesterol reduction after you leave the hospital will be made for you before discharge.

Discharge Medications

Your doctor will prescribe your discharge medications at least 2 hours before your discharge time. During the day of discharge, a pharmacist will bring you the discharge medication, and teach you about your medication. You will receive enough medication with refills to last until your next appointment.

Medication Counseling

The pharmacists will see you to review your medications. They will counsel you and your family on the need, dose, desired effect, and side effects of your medication. They will give you printed information when necessary. In the Pharmacy Waiting Area, a touch screen "Health Touch Education Computer" is available for more information. **Additional computers are located in the Primary Care and Specialty Care areas on 1C, 2C, & 3C; and in the 5th floor Medical Library.**

Discharge Day

If you still have questions about your medications, or other parts of your discharge instructions, talk with your doctor or unit nurse before leaving the medical center. You will be asked to sign your discharge instruction sheet and bring it with you when you return to your practice. A copy will be placed in your chart. If you have questions after you get home, you may call the unit, or the OPD Pharmacy (9:00am to 5:00pm) on ext. 5491, or your primary physician. You can also call the 24-hour telephone care number, 1-800-877-6976.

Billing

By law, VA is required to bill health insurance carriers for treatment provided to veterans for non-service-connected conditions. This means the VA must bill any health insurance plan providing coverage for you, including policies held by you, your spouse, your guardian, etc. To do this, the VA needs information about your health insurance coverage. We may call you at home or the pre-registration program from the NJ Health Care System will call you to get this information, or ask you for it when you come for treatment.

Always bring your insurance card(s) with you when you come to the VA, because it provides most of the insurance information we need.

Refer all billing questions to the Business Service Center, Billing Unit in Room GC-08 or call (718) 584-9000 ext. 6414. You can also call the Network Billing Center at 1-888-440-9587.

Medication Copayments

The Department of Veterans Affairs charges a \$7.00 copayment for each 30 day or less supply of medication provided on an outpatient basis for the treatment of a non-service -connected condition.

The medication copayment applies to prescriptions and over the counter medications (aspirin, cough syrup, vitamins, etc.). You are not charged a Medication Copayment for medical supplies such as syringes.

Medication Copayment Exemptions

Service connected veterans rated 50% or over are exempt from making the Medication Copayment, as are veterans in receipt of a VA pension. There is also an exemption to the copayment for veterans with low income. To be considered for an exemption, you must agree to provide income information to the VA. This information, collected through an income screening process is entered into the VA's hospital computer program. Your income information is then automatically compared to the limit set by law. If your income level is determined to be below the limit set by law, you are exempt from the \$7.00 Medication Copayment. If your income is determined to be greater than the limit set by law, you are not exempt. In addition, certain veterans with short-term financial need may be eligible for a waiver of the copayment. Payment may be made by cash, check or some credit cards. Payments received from your insurance company will be credited to your account.

Means Test: Veteran Copayments for Treatment

Most non-service-connected veterans and noncompensable 0% service-connected veterans are required to complete an annual Means Test. The Means Test is a measure of your family's income and assets; this includes your spouse's and dependent children's income. If your income and assets fall below the Means Test threshold you will not be charged copayments for medical treatment or fees for facility use; but the VA will charge your insurance carrier for your non-service-connected care and for medication. If your income and assets exceed the threshold, you will be charged copayments for non-service-connected medical treatment and fees for facility use; and the VA will charge your insurance carrier for your non-service-connected treatment and for medication refills. Payments made by your insurance company will be credited to your account. You may pay bills for which you are personally responsible by cash, check or some credit cards.

Income Screens: Paying for Medication

Most non-service-connected and service-connected veterans rated less than 50% should

complete the Income Screen. The Income Screen is a measure of your family's income alone; this includes your spouse's income and dependent children's as well. Completing an Income Screen may exempt you from making the \$7.00 Medication Copayment. If your income is below the limits set by law, you may be determined exempt from Medication Copayments.

If your income exceeds the limits set by law, you will likely be liable for Medication Copayments. You may, in certain instances be eligible for a waiver of your copayment charges. If you have any questions or concerns about the billing regulations, please contact the Business Service Center, Billing Unit at (718) 584-9000 ext. 6414.

Copayments for inpatient care in the hospital will be changed to all Category C patients. The present rates are \$10.00/per day for hospital care. In addition to these charges, a charge equal to the Medicare rate will be assessed every 90 days. The above charges paid by your insurance company will be credited to your account.

Extended Care Copayments

The Veterans Millennium Health Care and Benefits Act gave authority to the VA to charge copayments for extended care services. Any non-exempt veteran will have to pay a copayment dependent on the veteran's individual financial situation. Under the new regulations veterans get the first 21 days free in any 12-month period. After that, the maximum a veteran could pay is \$97 a day for nursing home care or respite care.

Veterans who are exempt from the copayment are veterans with a service connected disability, veterans whose annual income is less than the single veteran non-service connected disability pension amount, and those veterans who have received extended care services continuously since on or before November 30, 1999. Veterans who have questions about the long-term copayment should contact their social worker.

Regulations

Smoking

The Bronx VAMC is pleased to provide a smoke free environment for the continued good health of our patients, visitors, and staff. Cigarette smoking is not only harmful to your own health, but secondary smoke is harmful to the health of others. Ask your doctor or nurse about our Stop Smoking Program available to patients and staff who wish to quit smoking.

Smoking is also a dangerous hazard in a hospital due to the presence of gases and other flammable materials. Fires in hospitals can be deadly. Smoking in bed is prohibited. Smoking by ambulatory patients, visitors, or staff is prohibited within the Medical Center.

A sheltered area is available for your protection in bad weather. It is located in the outdoor patio area just outside the canteen.

Safety

The safety of all patients in our medical center is an important responsibility and your cooperation is needed. On occasion you may hear alarm bells for fire or disaster drills. Drills help to keep the staff prepared should a real fire occur.

In the rare event of a real fire or disaster in the medical center, the staff will instruct you. Just remain calm and follow directions. For your own safety:

1. Please observe all posted signs and do not smoke anywhere inside the medical center.
2. Please call the nurse if you see that another patient is in pain, is confused, unsteady, or has fallen.
3. Please call the nurse for assistance getting out of bed and never try to climb over your bed rails, or to walk alone in the dark, or when you are feeling weak, dizzy, or unsteady.
4. Please use corridor handrails when walking on the unit, and be alert for other people, equipment, or hazards in your path. Report any spills or wet areas on the unit floors to the nurse.
5. Please report any equipment, such as your bed, call button, light or TV that sparks or fails to work. Do not try to operate or repair broken equipment yourself.
6. Please report any spills in other areas such as elevators or stairwells by dialing Facility Management Program ext. 6185 or 6186 or tell the housekeeper.
7. Please do not bring in personally owned radios, televisions, tape recorders or use any other electrical equipment that has not been approved by Facility Management Program.
8. Please inform the staff of your destination when you leave the unit for any approved purpose and when you have returned.
9. Please do not loiter in the hallways or lobby of the medical center.

Parking

Those driving on the medical center grounds must observe the posted speed limits and parking signs. Parking space is limited and patient's cars cannot be left during hospitalization. Visitors may park only during visiting hours in designated areas.

Please do not park in spaces reserved for our handicapped patients and staff. Persons who operate or park cars in violation of these regulations are subject to U.S. Court Violation notice and a fine.

Patient Rights and Responsibilities

Veterans Health Administration (VHA) employees will respect and support your rights as a patient. We are pleased you have selected us to provide your health care. We plan to make our visit or stay as pleasant for you as possible. Your basic rights and responsibilities are outlined in this document.

If you have questions about your rights or if you feel dissatisfied with the quality of your care, you may contact your VA treatment team members or the Patient Advocate at ext. 6602/6516.

Patients Rights

The Bronx Veterans Affairs Medical Center recognizes the Patient's Bill of Rights of the American Hospital Association and has incorporated those rights into Medical Center policies. A copy of your rights and responsibilities is posted on each unit. Patient rights apply to veterans in any of the patient care centers.

Your rights as a patient at the Bronx Veterans Affairs Medical Center, include the right to:

I. Respect and Nondiscrimination

- a. You will be treated with dignity, compassion and respect as an individual. Your privacy will be protected. You will receive care in a safe environment. We will seek to honor your personal and religious values.
- b. You or someone you choose have the right to keep and spend your own money. You have the right to receive an accounting of VA held funds.
- c. Treatment will respect your personal freedoms. In rare cases, the use of medication and physical restraints may be used if all other efforts to keep you or others free from harm have not worked.
- d. As an inpatient or long-term care resident you may wear your own clothes and keep personal items. This depends on your medical condition.
- e. As an inpatient or long-term care resident, you have the right to social interaction, and regular exercise. You will have the opportunity for religious worship and spiritual support. You may decide whether or not to participate in these activities. You may decide whether or not to perform tasks in or for the Medical Center.
- f. As an inpatient or long-term care resident, you have the right to communicate freely and privately. You may have or refuse visitors. You will have access to public telephones. You may participate in civic rights.
- g. As a long-term care resident, you can organize and take part in resident groups in the facility. Your family also can meet with the families of other residents.
- h. In order to provide a safe treatment environment for all patients and staff you are asked to respect other patients and staff and to follow the facility's rules. Avoid unsafe acts that place others at risk for accidents or injuries. Please immediately report any condition you believe to be unsafe.

II. Information Disclosure and Confidentiality

- a. You will be given information about the health benefits that you can receive. The information will be provided in a way you can understand.
- b. You will receive information about the costs of your care, if any, before you are treated. You are responsible for paying for your portion of the costs associated with your care.

- c. Your medical record will be kept confidential. Information about you will not be released without your consent unless authorized by law (i.e., State public health reporting). You have the right to information in your medical record and may request a copy of your records. This will be provided except in rare situations where your VA physician feels the information will be harmful to you. In that situation, you have the right to have this discussed with you by your VA provider.
- d. You will be informed of all outcomes of care, including any injuries caused by your medical care. You will be informed about how to request compensation for injuries.

III. Participation in Treatment Decisions

- a. You, and any persons you choose, will be involved in all decisions about your care. You will be given information you can understand about the benefits and risks of treatment. You will be given other options. You can agree to or refuse treatment. Refusing treatment will not affect your rights to future care but you have the responsibility to understand the possible results to your health. If you believe you cannot follow the treatment plan you have a responsibility to notify the treatment team.
- b. As an inpatient or long-term care resident, you will be provided any transportation necessary for your treatment plan.
- c. You will be given, in writing, the name and professional title of the provider in charge of your care. As a partner in the healthcare process, you have the right to be involved in choosing your provider. You will be educated about your role and responsibilities as a patient. This includes your participation in decision-making and care at the end of life.
- d. Tell your provider about your current condition, medicines (including over the counter and herbals) and medical history. Also, share any other information that affects your health. You should ask questions when you don't understand something about your care. This will help in providing you the best care possible.
- e. You have the right to have your pain assessed and to receive treatment to manage your pain. You and your treatment team will develop a pain management plan together. You are expected to help the treatment team by telling them if you have pain and if the treatment is working.
- f. You have the right to choose whether or not you will participate in any research project. Any research will be clearly identified. Potential risks of the research will be identified and there will be no pressure on you to participate.
- g. You will be included in resolving any ethical issues about your care. You may consult with the Medical Center's Ethics Committee and/or other staff knowledgeable about health care ethics. Members of the Medical Center Ethics Committee can be reached for a consultation by calling ext. 3458 or 6491
- h. If you or the Medical Center believes that you have been neglected, abused or exploited, you will receive help.

IV. Complaints

You are encouraged and expected to seek help from your treatment team and/or a patient advocate if you have problems or complaints. You will be given understandable information about the complaint process available to you. You may complain verbally or in writing, without fear of retaliation.

Patients Responsibilities

To the degree possible, patient responsibilities are:

1. To follow all of the medical center's safety rules and posted signs.
2. To try to be considerate and respectful of all medical center personnel and other patients.
3. To cooperate with the treatment staff. If questions or disagreement with treatment plan occurs, the patient is responsible for discussing it with the treatment staff.
4. To try to prevent injury to oneself, other patients, visitors and staff members by their own actions and to be responsible for the safekeeping of clothing, money, and personal possessions they choose to keep with them while they are in this facility.
5. To keep all of their scheduled diagnostic or treatment appointments on time.
6. To avoid interfering with treatment or other patients, particularly in emergency situations.
7. To assist by alerting the staff when another patient is having any difficulty.
8. To inform visitors to be considerate of other patients and medical center personnel, and observe the visiting hours.
9. To comply with the smoke-free policy. Smoking is only permitted in designated areas.
10. To be understanding and patient during delays.
11. To make sure there is understanding about the medications to be taken following discharge from the medical center, and whether an outpatient follow-up visit(s) is scheduled.

Informed Consent

The doctor responsible for your care will explain your diagnosis, prognosis, and your treatment choices. This information will be in words you can understand so you may decide to accept or refuse care. Your doctor will explain the expected medical results of refusing recommended treatment. You have the right to refuse any medical treatment or procedure including blood or blood products.

Before any medical treatment or procedure is started, your doctor will provide information about any known risks, the probable length of time you will be affected, and any reasonable medical alternative to such care. Your doctor will obtain your written consent or signature for specific treatments, procedures, or surgery as required in hospital policy.

If it is not possible, due to your physical or mental condition, to provide information about your diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment choices directly to you, such information will be provided to your next-of-kin, legal guardian, health care proxy or other adult over the age of 18, appointed by you to make health care decisions in your best interest.

Before any research study or procedure is started, your doctor will provide information and obtain your written consent or signature as described above. Refusing to participate in research studies will NOT affect your right to receive proper medical care.

Supportive Care: Philosophy of Caring

You have the right to have your personal, cultural, and spiritual values and beliefs considered when treatment decisions are made. You have the right to receive appropriate management of any pain, and supportive treatment for uncomfortable physical and emotional symptoms.

Pain Management Treatment Program is dedicated to helping the patient win the battle against

pain, regain function, and return to the activities the veteran enjoys.

Here at the Bronx VA, we have assembled an integrated team of doctors, anesthesiologists, nurse practitioners, rehabilitation therapists and psychiatrists who offer compassionate personalized care. Acupuncture, bio-feedback and hydrotherapy are now included in the scope of treatment.

Supportive Care Unit

This unit provides comprehensive care of the physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs of patients with incurable and progressive illnesses and their family. **This unit is located in the Extended Care Center and patients in this unit are exempt from the long-term co-payment.**

Our goal is for the patient to achieve a quality of life that is free of pain with relief of symptoms. We do this while remaining sensitive to the patient and family's culture, and religious beliefs.

Pastoral Care

Each patient's personal, cultural, spiritual, and religious values will be respected by all who care for them. Your own pastor or spiritual caregiver will be able to minister to you, or a staff chaplain will provide pastoral care appropriate to your religious convictions. During your hospitalization, you have the right to participate in public worship and to practice private devotions as your health permits. Here in the Medical Center you have the right to be free from proselytism or any religious or spiritual coercion.

Chaplains are provided to ensure these rights. For details of our religious services and pastoral care program, please see the section on "Chaplains" under Medical Center Support Programs.

Confidentiality

All health care activities, such as examinations, treatments, procedures, consultations, and case presentations will be conducted so as to preserve your privacy. Your medical record or chart will be safeguarded and available only to those with a right or need to know its contents in order to provide your care.

Copies of your Medical Record can be sent to any person or agency providing your follow up care. Requests for release of information from your medical record require your written consent.

Copies of your Medical Record can be sent to any person or agency that you request. Requests for release of information from your medical record require your written consent. You may request to review your medical records or request an amendment of your medical record. This can be done by contacting the Release of Medical Information Department, Room GC24.

Advance Directives

Advance Directives protect your right to accept or refuse medical treatment if you ever become mentally or physically unable to choose or communicate your choices due to illness or injury. Advance Directives are carried out only after you are declared medically not able to make your own informed health decisions.

Advance Directives, such as Health Care Proxy or Durable Power of Attorney, allow you, in advance of illness or incapacity, to name the person that you wish to make health care decisions, should you become medically unable to make them yourself.

Advance Directives, such as Living Wills or treatment preferences, allow you, in advance of illness or incapacity, to state your personal choices for starting or stopping certain medical treatments, requesting Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) order, donating organs, or using life prolonging

procedures and equipment.

Advance Directives written by you before admission to this VAMC should be discussed with your VA doctor. New York State law gives you the right to designate a Health Care Proxy. Such an Advance Directive from New York, or from any other state, in which it is legal, will be forwarded to our Regional Council for approval and then placed in your medical record.

You may choose to write VA Advance Directives. Your doctor will provide medical information you may need and other staff will provide counseling and help with any ethical concerns you may have. VA Advance Directives will be placed in your medical record and may be revised or cancelled by you at any time.

If you do not have any written Advance Directives and become medically unable to make informed decisions, all information for such health care decisions will be given to your next- of-kin, or legal guardian to enable them to make health care decisions for you. All decisions made by others on your behalf should be based on what is known about your wishes for care, or absent of that knowledge, what is in your best interest.

Do Not Resuscitate (DNR)

Any patient may request that a Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) order be written in his medical record. Resuscitation involves using a variety of procedures to restore breathing and heart action after the heart has stopped.

You may speak with your doctor or other staff members for more information about cardiac resuscitation procedures and their effects. You may request a DNR order even if you have not written any Advance Directives. The order is reviewed regularly and may be cancelled at any time.

Your doctor will obtain your written informed consent for a DNR order, or if you are medically not able to make such a decision, the consent of your next-of-kin, legal guardian or adult over the age of 18 appointed by you to make decisions in your best interest.

Organ Donation

The VA participates in the New York Regional Organ Transplant Program and respects the wishes of veterans to give the gift of life. If you wish to be considered as a potential organ donor, speak with your doctor. Your doctor will let you know if your medical condition allows you to be a suitable organ donor.

You may choose to become an organ donor even if you have not written any Advance Directives. Your doctor will obtain your written, informed consent or the consent of your next- of-kin, legal guardian, or other adult over the age of 18 appointed by you if you are medically NOT ABLE to make such a decision. The order is reviewed regularly and your decision may be changed at any time.

Ethical Consultations

We recognize that sometimes it is very difficult to make certain treatment decisions when they appear to be in conflict with your personal values or religious beliefs. If you or members of your family have any ethical concerns or conflicts, we can assist you to resolve those conflicts. Just follow these steps:

First: Speak with your family, doctor, nurse, or other members of your treatment team to better understand treatment procedures or to clear up misunderstandings. Speak with your personal spiritual advisor or a member of our Chaplain program to review your religious teachings.

Second: Speak with the Patient Representative, located on the 9th floor, ext. 6602 or 6516, if there continues to be conflict between your wishes and those of your treatment team.

Third: Request a case review by the Medical Center Ethics Committee regarding any ethical issues in your care. Members of the Medical Center Ethics Committee can be reached for a consultation by calling ext. 3458 or 6491.

The purpose of an ethical consultation is to assure that the patient, family, and treatment team are communicating effectively and that the personal values of all parties have been explored. The consultation team does not make treatment decisions. It assists those who do, you and your treatment team.

Patient Advocates

If you have any concerns, please speak to your nurse or doctor. If the issue is not resolved, the Patient Advocate may be able to assist you. Our Patient Advocates are available to help you with any complaints that are not resolved by other staff. They will help answer questions about hospital policy and procedures and assist you with other needs that might increase your satisfaction with your care. Please call or ask a staff member to page if you wish to speak with the Patient Advocate at ext. 6602/6516.

Gratuities

Tipping is neither allowed nor expected. If you wish to convey your thanks to a member of staff please send a letter which will be greatly appreciated. Please remember that we are here to help you and give you the best care.

Kingsbridge Suites (HOPTEL)

Kingsbridge suites are a unit of 11 safe and comfortable rooms on 4B set up to provide lodging for eligible patients or family members. The rooms are similar to hotel rooms. No medical or nursing care is provided. No food service is provided.

To be considered for the unit, a patient must live 25 miles or more from the Medical Center. Patients scheduled for early morning surgery, outpatient endoscopies, radiation or chemotherapy may be considered for pre procedure accommodation. Stays are limited to 5 days.

Visiting Hours

Exceptions to the following hours can be made based on individual needs, however, visitors will be asked to WAIT during medical rounds and when patients are receiving medical treatment, nursing care, or are off the unit attending therapy programs.

Intensive Care Unit (8C)

Immediate family only, 10 minutes at a time from noon to 8:00pm

Extended Care (NHCU)

11:00am to 8:00pm daily.

Supportive Care Unit (within Extended Care)

11:00am to 8:00pm daily.

Medical/Surgical & SCI Units

10:00am to 8:00pm daily.

Mental Health Unit

6:00pm to 8:00pm weekdays, and 2:00pm to 6:00pm weekends and holidays.

Mail and Telephone Service

To have your mail delivered as quickly as possible, please address as follows:

Veterans Affairs Medical Center
Your name _____ Unit # _____
130 West Kingsbridge Road
Bronx, New York 10468

Mailboxes are located near the rear service elevators on the first floor, and just outside the front entrance to the medical center. Stamps can be purchased from the Postal Service machines located outside the retail store on the first floor.

In addition to your bedside phone, there are coin operated public telephones located on each floor behind the rear service elevators. Official medical center phones may not be used for your personal calls.

Primary Care Centers

The definition of "Primary Care" is that it is comprehensive, coordinated, continuous health care, which is accessible, accountable, and includes all preventive measures. Maintaining and improving your health involves a partnership between you and your Primary Care providers. Together, you will set up a plan for effective treatment services for your health care problems as well as recommended educational, preventive and wellness services. In addition to treating any chronic and acute health problems that you may have, services in Primary Care include immunizations, screening examinations and lab tests to detect early signs of illness.

Counseling to assist you in making healthy lifestyle changes, support for social and emotional issues, referrals to community agencies and health education on your medications, diet, and treatment plan are located close to the primary practice to help you improve your own health. Your provider may refer you to one of our group educational programs, and arrange needed consultations with specialists, if necessary.

Primary Care Practices

All veterans are assigned to a Primary Care Provider, most of who are located in the Primary Care Practices. Once enrolled, you will see the same team of providers for every visit. The Primary Care Practices, including Women's Health Wellness and Compensation and Pension are located on the first floor in suites A, B, or D. Hours are Monday through Friday, except Holidays, from 7:30am to 4:00pm.

To schedule or cancel an appointment, please be sure to call directly to your provider area. You will be seen as promptly as possible, so please keep all scheduled appointments and avoid walk in visits.

To receive medical advice in an emergency after hours, contact the VISN 3 Nurse Help Line at 800-877-6976.

Specialty Care Practices

If you have a single health problem that requires long-term supervision by a specialist, you will be enrolled in one of our Specialty Care practices. Specialty Care practices also provides comprehensive diagnostic, treatment, education and preventive services while managing your special health problem. The Specialty Care practices are available for consultation to all patients if felt necessary by the Primary Care Provider.

You will be given the names of all your Specialty Care providers and information on how to reach them in an emergency. The Specialty Care Practices include:

Alcohol Dependency Treatment Program (ADTP): Provides services for patients recently discharged from alcohol treatment, those receiving Antabuse Therapy or those requiring rehabilitation or psychiatric treatment for conditions aggravated by alcoholism.

Cardiology Associates: Provides services for patients with severe coronary artery disease, arrhythmias, congestive heart failure and valvular heart disease.

Endocrine Associates: Provide services for patients with poorly controlled diabetes, thyroid, & endocrine disorders.

Extended Care/Geriatrics: Provides rehabilitative services for patients discharged from Extended Care Center, and those over 60 with impaired activities of daily living or psychological functioning.

Gastroenterology (GI) Associates: Provides services to patients with chronic liver disease, ulcer diseases, inflammatory bowel disease, GI motility and malabsorptive disorders.

Hematology/Oncology Associates: Provides services to patients with severe anemias, clotting disorders, white cell disorders, hematological malignancies, and those requiring antitumor treatment.

Infectious Disease Associates: Provides services to patients with AIDS, HIV, HEP-C, Tuberculosis, other infectious diseases requiring long term management.

Neurology Associates: Provides services to patients with epilepsy, migraine disorders, myopathies, neuromuscular disorders, Parkinson's, recent stroke, TIA, and tumors of the brain.

Pulmonary Associates: Provides services to patients with asthma, bronchiectasis, COPD, pulmonary fibrosis, and sarcoidosis.

Renal Associates: Provides services to patients with end stage renal disease including dialysis, nephrotic syndrome, and other special renal disorders.

Rheumatology Associates: Provides services to patients with rheumatoid or psoritic arthritis, dermatomyositis, lupus, scleroderma, spondylitis.

Spinal Cord Injury Associates: Provides services to patients with paralysis from disease or trauma to the spinal cord.

Consultative Services: Some of the specialists who support the Primary Care and Specialty Care practices include Dental, Dermatology, Psychiatry, Rehabilitation, Surgery and Surgical specialties such as Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT), Eye, Gynecology, Neurosurgery, Orthopedics, Plastics, Rectal, Urology and Vascular.

Urgent Care

The Urgent Care Center is located on the first floor between the Emergency Room and the

Primary Care practice suites. Urgent Care serves as a reception area and triage for the Emergency Room, and new or walk-in patients not yet assigned to a Primary Care provider. A Triage Nurse, a Physician's Assistant, and a Medical Assistant are available to assess the patient, provide care, register into a Primary Care practice, or bring to the ER as indicated. Urgent Care should not be used to "drop in" without an appointment if you have a Primary Care provider. The business hours are from 8:00am to 4:30pm.

VISN3 Nurse Help Line

The VISN3 Nurse Help Line at 800-877-6976 has been established for any veteran in VISN3 who has a medical problem or question 24 hours a day. Calls to the VISN3 Nurse Help Line will be answered by a registered nurse who can talk with you about medication problems, symptoms you are experiencing, advise you about coming into the emergency room or make an appointment for you at your medical center. Calls during regular day hours should be directed to your provider.

Emergency Care

The Emergency Admitting Unit is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you become acutely ill and have a medical, surgical or psychiatric emergency, please call your practice provider.

If you do not have a Primary Care provider, please call Urgent Care during day hours, or the VISN3 Nurse Help Line during evening, weekend or night hours. If your provider or the Telephone Care nurse determines that a visit to the ER is needed, come promptly to the ER on the first floor. If you have an accident or injury or severe chest pain and/or difficulty breathing call 911 and request transport to nearest hospital ER.

Medical/Surgical Emergencies: Acute medical or surgical problems are promptly evaluated and emergency medical treatment provided in the emergency unit.

If necessary, you will be admitted to the medical center for continued medical care. If admission is not necessary, you may be kept in the ER for up to 23 hours of observation and needed treatment, given an appointment with your practice and discharged.

Psychiatric Emergencies: Emergency psychiatric services are also available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in the emergency unit

If you are a veteran who is 50% Service connected or above and apply for care at the Medical Center for the first time, you are entitled to an appointment with a primary care physician within 30 days.

Psychiatric or mental health problems are evaluated and treatment is provided. If necessary, you will be admitted to the medical center for continued psychiatric care, or treated in one of the outpatient mental health programs.

For other psychiatric problems you may visit the Mental Health Intake Team on 4th floor, 4C Area, Monday-Friday, 9:00am to 3:30pm.

Primary Care Nutrition Clinic

The Nutrition Clinic is located in room 2C-165, just outside of Suite F. Your doctor, nurse or other health care team member can make a referral appointment for you to receive instruction for your particular nutrition needs.

There are also several group classes to help you stay healthy or manage diseases such as diabetes, high blood cholesterol, and obesity. No appointments are needed for regular group classes and families are welcome. The various group class schedules can be found on the

patient education activities calendar. In addition, group class schedules for Patient Health Education are located on the bulletin boards near elevators and clinics.

Outpatient Pharmacy

Your provider can write your prescription electronically for as many refills as needed to provide up to a years supply of certain maintenance medications. A prescription can be written for shorter periods of time on certain medications or cancelled before all refills are used. Expired prescriptions require your provider to write a new prescription if the medicine is still needed.

New Prescriptions

When your provider orders a new prescription it is transmitted electronically to the pharmacy. Please take a number upon entering the pharmacy waiting room. You will be called by a pharmacist for medication counseling on a first-come-first-served basis.

Once your number appears on the board a pharmacist will be able to assist you.

The pharmacist will check to see that the prescription is written correctly, that the date, time and quantity are correct, and that there is no conflict with this medication and any other you may be taking.

If your medication is needed immediately and you choose to wait for your medications, you will be given a claim ticket. If you choose not to wait, tell the pharmacist so that your medications can be mailed to you. When your prescription is ready for pick up, your name will flash on the patient notification monitors located in the pharmacy waiting area and the canteen. Any medications not picked up within 5 days will be returned to stock.

Medication Counseling

Pharmacists are available in the inpatient and outpatient centers. While in the hospital, they will counsel the patient on his current medication. The patient will receive written instructions for his discharge medications. In the Pharmacy Waiting Area, a touch screen "Health Touch Patient Education Computer" will provide additional information. In the primary care centers, the pharmacist is located in B suite.

Medication Refills

In order for us to serve you better, all refill prescriptions will be mailed to your home (certain refrigerated medications are not included).

3 Simple Ways to Request Refills

1. Touch-tone phone only: Toll-free 1-888-327-9670. Your social security and prescription numbers needed.
2. Drop bar-coded refill tick in refill box located in the pharmacy waiting area.
3. Mail bar-coded refill ticket to Bronx V.A. Pharmacy.

PLEASE REQUEST YOUR REFILLS IMMEDIATELY. DO NOT WAIT UNTIL YOU ARE ALMOST OUT OF MEDICATION TO REQUEST THEM.

If you do not receive refills before your supply runs out, call the pharmacy at (718) 584-9000 ext. 5490.

Patient Care Centers

The Bronx VAMC provides a continuum of comprehensive health care through the integration of all our Patient Care centers. In addition to the Primary Care Center, there are the following:

Critical Care Center

The Critical Care Center promotes the integration of the Emergency Room and the Urgent Care Center on the 1st floor, the Operating and Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) including Anesthesia and the Ambulatory Surgery suite on the 2nd floor, and the Multidisciplinary Intensive Care Unit located on the 8th floor.

In the Intensive Care Unit we have an ancillary laboratory for emergency tests and blood gases. Areas for special procedures such as the Cardiac Catheterization Lab, GI Endoscopy and Invasive Radiology are located in the Ambulatory Surgery Suite area on the 2nd floor. Finally, on the 8th floor we have the Pulmonary Function Test Lab and Respiratory Therapy Department. Our employees work as integrated professional teams to provide efficient and effective emergency, surgical, and critical care to veterans along with caring and compassion for families under stress.

Diagnostic Services Care Center

The Diagnostic Services Care Center promotes the integration of all non-invasive diagnostic testing including general radiology (X-Ray), Neuroradiology, Ultrasound and Doppler studies, CT scans, MRI, Interventional Radiology, Nuclear Medicine, and comprehensive Pathology and Laboratory testing.

Our employees in the center work efficiently and with a high level of technological skill to provide a wide range of expanding diagnostic services for this and other medical centers in the VISN.

Extended Care Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation

The Extended Care Center is designed to provide a safe, homelike environment for approximately 112 veterans who have special extended care needs. 15 of the 112 beds are designated GEM (Geriatric Evaluation Management) beds with a length of stay of 31 days, 5 beds are designated for acute rehabilitation, and 8 beds are designated as our Supportive Care Unit. The acute rehabilitation unit is for patients admitted to the Comprehensive Inpatient Integrated Rehabilitation Program (CIIRP) which is an intensive rehab program with an average length of stay of approximately 2 weeks.

The purpose of extended care is to provide medical treatment, nursing, and rehabilitation during a short-term stay so patients can maximize their functional abilities and adapt to a life style within the limitations imposed by disease or disability. This prepares them to return home or live in the community setting after maximum improvements have been achieved. The staff works together in a caring and courteous manner with volunteer groups to provide a wide range of therapeutic social and recreational activities.

Medical/Surgical Care Center

The Medical/Surgical Care center, consisting of 3 units containing 120 beds, promotes the delivery of skilled integrated professional teams care to veterans with acute medical or surgical illnesses. The Telephone Care Program and the Home Based Primary Care programs are part of the center's plans to empower patients to better manage their illness, maintain wellness and

reduce hospital length of stay. The staff works together to provide quality healthcare in a courteous and efficient manner.

Mental Health Care Center

The Mental Health Care Center offers integrated programs for veterans with mental health and/or substance abuse problems. All new patients seeking non-emergency psychiatric care are seen on a walk-in basis by the Intake Team, evaluated and referred to the most appropriate mental health program.

Programs include acute inpatient psychiatric treatment, an outpatient psychiatric clinic with two sub-specialties (Geri-Psychiatry and Schizophrenia Treatment), outpatient Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) clinic, comprehensive Substance Abuse Programs for Drug and Alcohol dependency and outpatient detoxification. Compensated Work Therapy & Incentive Therapy programs are available to veterans seeking supported employment opportunities. Unique programs for homeless veterans are also provided at the facility and at a Single Room Residence (SRO).

Spinal Cord Injury Care Center

The Spinal Cord Injury Care Center is a 62-bed unit. The goal of the Center is to stabilize injury, prevent complications and promote independent or assisted living in the community. The employees of the center work together as an integrated professional team to provide rehabilitation services including; medical, nursing care, physical and occupational therapy, ADL, pressure ulcer treatment, driver training, computer training, and home based personal care. Additional programs include a SCI Damage Research Center, an Outpatient Clinic, Wheelchair Clinic, Telemedicine, and Aquatic Therapy.

Medical Center Support Programs

Audiology & Speech Pathology Program

Provides complete audiological, speech, language and swallowing evaluations to both inpatients and outpatients. Rehabilitation services such as speech/language therapy, hearing aid evaluation and instruction are available on an individual or group basis. Your provider must make a referral for services.

Blood Bank

In order for the medical center to have a sufficient supply of blood to meet the needs of our patients, our Blood Bank seeks donations from many sources. Patients are encouraged to request family or friends to donate blood. You may donate your own blood prior to elective surgery if your doctor approves. The Blood Bank is open weekdays from 8:30am to 4:30pm in room 2B-01.

Canteen (VCS)

The Veterans Canteen Service includes the cafeteria, the retail store, the barbershop, and the vending machine area. The cafeteria serves staff, visitors, and outpatients only. Inpatients will not be served.

The retail store has a variety of personal and gift items for sale including clothing, grooming articles, perfumes, watches, radios and television and snack food items. Other services include dry cleaning, and photo developing.

Cafeteria (First floor 1B-32)

Open: Mon.-Fri. 7:30am - 3:30pm; Sat. & Sun. 9:00am-2:30pm. Closed: All Federal Holidays

Vending Machines (First floor 1B-32)

The vending machine section of the cafeteria is open 24 hours a day. Newspapers are sold in the cafeteria, and the Retail Store.

Retail Store (First floor 1B-28)

Open: Monday thru Friday, from 7:30am-4:00pm. Closed: All Federal Holidays

Barbershop (Ground Floor GA-11)

Open: Mon., & Tues. 9:00am-3:30pm.

Closed: All Federal Holidays.

Call the barbershop (ext. 5453) to arrange for a unit visit. Unit visits are done on Wednesdays, by appointment only.

Chaplains

Chaplains give pastoral care to patients and their families, with full respect for patients' religious convictions and for their relationships with their own pastors and faith communities.

Chaplains conduct religious services (in Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, and Protestant traditions), arrange interfaith observances on holidays, and provide appropriate space for private prayer and meditation. Weekly services are conducted in the historic Interfaith Chapel, which is fully accessible by wheelchair or stretcher from the second floor of the Nursing Home/Extended Care Unit; these services are broadcast by closed circuit television throughout the Medical Center on channel 12. Daily services are conducted in the Devotional Room in the main hospital building, room 3E-52. A weekly schedule of services is available at each ward's nurses station. The Interfaith Chapel, the Devotional Room, and the Eucharistic Reservation Room (3E-50), are available around the clock for individual prayer or meditation, except when services are scheduled there.

Spiritual care and guidance are provided in chaplains' offices or at bedside. Pastoral counsel may be scheduled through our Program Assistant; call extension 5455 or visit room 3E-81 for an appointment.

As part of the clinical staff, chaplains assess your spiritual needs to assure that all members of the health care team understand and respect your spiritual and religious values, as these affect your total care.

Bereavement counsel and support are offered to patients' families. Interfaith memorial programs are arranged periodically in conjunction with the Supportive Care program.

Decedent Affairs

A representative is located in room 9A-06, extension 4686, Monday thru Friday from 8:00am to 4:30pm. He can assist in arranging for burial, or obtaining other benefits due to next-of-kin of a deceased veteran.

Dental Program

The Dental Program is a consultation program. Therefore, all patients seen in the Dental Program are referred by electronic consults, which contain the patient's diagnoses, reasons for referral, vital signs, and whether or not the referring physician considers dental treatment necessary for the patient's health and well being.

In order for non-service connected veterans to be eligible for limited care, the physician must explain how a specific medical condition will worsen if dental treatment is not provided. Patients are scheduled for oral examinations and dental X-rays as soon as it is medically possible. Emergency dental treatment may be provided in the hospital if determined to be medically necessary by the treating physician, and the Chief Dentist. Only dental work begun on service connected veterans, or those with very serious medical problems, will be completed after discharge.

The Dental program is a Specialty Clinic, and is located on the second floor, ÒCÓ wing. Outpatients will receive only emergency care for the relief of dental pain, or the treatment of dental infection unless the dental problem is service connected, or necessary for the patient's health and well being. Individual veterans may be billed for emergency dental treatment if they do not have statutory eligibility for dental care.

Home Based Primary Care (HBPC)

Home Based Primary Care is available to veterans who require short term nursing care in their homes to improve physical and mental functioning without the need for travel to the Medical Center. The nurse will assess your care needs and teach family members who give care in your home. Supplies, medications, and equipment will be delivered to the home. Housekeeping services such as cooking, cleaning, shopping are not provided. Plans for your continuing care, including referrals for both community and VA services will be arranged when you are ready for discharge from HBPC. Evaluation for the program requires your doctor's referral.

Library

Books, newspapers, and magazines, as well as health information pamphlets and videotapes are available in the general library.

Librarian assistance is available on request. A library service book cart brings books and magazines to bed bound patients on all units and the Nursing Home Care Unit. Library hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 4:30pm.

Patient Education Resource Center (PERC)

The PERC, is a comprehensive, up-to-date resource area for patients and their families located in the Medical Library on the fifth floor and has the following available resources:

1. Health Information Videos
2. Internet access to selected Patient Education Sites
3. A desktop Healthtouch Information Kiosk with information on over 3000 health topics accompanied by instructional videos and medical images.
4. Patient Education brochures/pamphlets
5. Anatomical posters on common medical diseases/health topics including anatomy and physiology

All patients and their families are welcome.

Medical Administration Program (MAP)

Medical Administration Program assists you to better understand and use the VA healthcare system by providing information about:

- Veterans Administration Benefits

- Eligibility entitlement for healthcare benefits (inpatient, outpatient, Extended Care and Dental)
- Request to release a copy of your medical records to outside sources
- Request to Amend portions of your medical record
- Request to Review your Medical Record

Medical Care

Your doctor will be an attending physician who is a permanent member of our staff. The attending physician will supervise resident doctors who provide much of your care on the units. Your doctors are available for you or your family at anytime during your stay.

Nursing Care

Registered professional nurses coordinate and provide your nursing care 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The RN supervises the work of licensed practical nurses, nursing assistants, and patient care associates on your unit.

Registered Nurses certified as Case Managers also assist the interdisciplinary team with the planning of your care. Please feel free to discuss any questions or concerns you may have about your care with your nurse or the nurse in charge.

Nutrition & Food Program

Dietitians, dietetic technicians, together with food service workers, provide tasty and nutritious meals for your prescribed diet plan. If you are at nutritional risk, a registered dietitian assigned to your unit will assess your needs, coordinate your dietary treatment and provide you and your family with information to help you understand and follow your diet plan.

Dietitians also participate in various health education programs for specific patient and family groups.

Patient Health Education & Preventive Medicine Program

Members of your treatment team can answer your questions, give you information about your health problems and treatment plan, help you make informed decisions and prepare you to manage after discharge. Health Education books and pamphlets are available in your patient care center, Primary/Specialty practice area, and in the Patient and Family Resource Center in the library.

There are educational and support groups for women veterans and for patients learning to live with chronic illness like Diabetes, ESRD, Spinal Cord Injury, HIV Infection, and Cardiac illness. Cognitive/behavioral programs for patients who wish to reduce risks and change lifestyles, such as stop smoking, reduce weight, increase fitness, manage stress, reduce cholesterol, are also available.

Prosthetics and Sensory Aids

Prosthetics and Sensory Aids such as orthotics, orthopedic shoes, prostheses, sensory aids, wheelchairs, other medical equipment, supplies, or assistive devices are provided to veterans based on need and eligibility. Your doctor's Prosthetics request is required. Veterans are required

to receive training in the use of the equipment prior to receiving it.

Psychology

Psychologists provide psychological testing, assessment and counseling for individuals, couples, families and larger groups. Educational and vocational counseling and cognitive behavioral programs to change lifestyle and reduce risks are also available.

Recreation Therapy

Recreation Therapists provide activities to patients based on identified leisure needs. Therapists are located in the Extended Care center, Spinal Cord Injury center and the Mental Health Center. Activities are planned to enhance leisure skills and improve your quality of life during hospitalization and after discharge.

Rehabilitation Medicine

Rehabilitation Medicine is a medical specialty providing diagnosis, and treatment for patients with disabilities such as pain, weakness, limitation of movement, loss of function, inability to work or take care of daily personal needs. Doctors called Physiatrists and Therapists in Physical, Occupational, and Kinesiotherapy, help the patient to reach maximum function and adapt to the community.

Social Work

A social worker is assigned to your center to provide help in dealing with your reactions to your illness or disability, resolving any family, money or housing problems and planning for your discharge. Social Workers provide counseling to individuals and in-group support programs for specific patient populations as well as community outreach programs linking homeless veterans to the medical center.

They assist outpatients through the Resource, Entitlement, and Advocacy Program (REAP) to determine eligibility for Medicaid, food stamps, housing, public assistance, legal aid, veterans benefits, and social security. The REAP volunteer is located across from the Agent Cashier on the 1st floor, suite C, Monday through Friday from 10:00am to 12noon and 1:00pm to 3:00pm.

VA Police

VA Police Officers are primarily responsible for maintaining law and order, the protection of patients, visitors, employees, and for the protection of government and private property. The protection of patients from harm by others or themselves is to be accomplished with the foremost concern for each patient's welfare, and with extreme care that the police handling does not result in physical injury or mental anguish to any patient. Courtesy and competence are qualities demanded of all VA Police Officers.

The x-ray machine and metal detectors located in the main lobby of the medical center are needed to prevent the unauthorized introduction of weapons into the medical center.

VA Regulations Title 38, United States Code, Section 1, 218(B) Schedule of Offenses and Penalties are posted at the entry to the medical center. Violations of the rules subjects an offender to arrest and removal from the premises. Whoever is found guilty of violating these rules is subject to a fine or imprisonment of not more than six (6) months, as may be determined appropriate by a magistrate or judge of the United States District Court. The following actions are unacceptable, and are violations of these rules:

- ¥ Unauthorized introduction of alcoholic beverages or narcotic drugs.
- ¥ Entering the premises under the influence of alcoholic beverages or narcotic drugs.
- ¥ Possession of knives which exceed a blade length of three (3) inches, switchblade knives, and any of the variety of hatchets, clubs or brass knuckles.
- ¥ Threats, verbal abuse or attempts at physical assault against patients, visitors or staff.
- ¥ Theft or damage to government property.

NYS Veterans Benefits Office

A veterans benefits counselor is located in room 2A-26, ext. 6361, Monday thru Friday from 8:30am to 4:00pm. The veterans benefits counselor provides helpful information for getting any benefits for which you may be eligible such as Government Life Insurance, educational benefits for school, on -the-job training or vocational retraining, G.I. loans for homes, and VA disability payment for service connected and non service connected disabilities.

Volunteers

Volunteers donate their personal time to help with feeding and escorting patients, and doing personal errands for patients such as letter writing, shopping, and laundry. Volunteers also work within various centers providing support to staff.

Veterans Community Service Organizations donate money and gifts, and host social and recreational events to improve the quality of life for hospitalized veterans. If you wish to see a member of any service organization, leave a message ext. 5473 or at the offices on the 3rd floor.

Women Veterans Health Program

The Women Veterans Health Program promotes equal access and quality health care to women veterans. In addition to Women's Health Primary Care Practice, the services for women include mammography, gynecology, sexual trauma counseling, health education and behavioral health. The Women Veterans Program Manager can be reached at ext. 5872, or 4625.

Important Information About You

Your health and well being are important to us and we wish you a speedy recovery and hope that the information in this handbook will be helpful to you.

About Yourself

Name: _____

Social Security #: _____

Address: _____

Telephone #: _____

About Your Unit

Unit: _____

Phone #: _____

Doctor: _____

Clinical Manager: _____

Social Worker: _____

About Your Primary/Specialty Care

Practice: _____

Primary Provider: _____

Telephone #: _____

Next Practice Appointment: _____

About Your Discharge

Discharge Instructions: _____

Diet: _____

Medications: _____

Self-Care: _____

Equipment: _____

Emergency Actions: _____

Appointments: _____

Follow Up Care

Ambulatory Programs

The Bronx VA Health Care System has ambulatory programs at the following locations:

Bronx VA.....(718) 584-9000
White Plains Clinic.....(914) 421-1951
Yonkers Clinic(914) 964-7992
Queens Clinic(718) 741-4800
South Bronx Clinic.....(718) 584-9000 x4900
Nurse Help Line.....(800) 877-6976

Important Telephone Numbers

Castle Point VA(914) 831-2000
FDR VA.....(914) 737-4400
New York Harbor VA(212) 686-7500
Regional Office(800) 827-1000

Adult Protective Services

Bronx(212) 630-1853
Rockland County(914) 364-3571

Westchester County

Northern.....(914) 962-3464
South East(914) 937-1100
South West(914) 964-6000

Practice Locations & Extensions

Practice	Location	Extension
Accounts Receivable	GC-08	5789

Administrative Offices	9C Area	5643
Audiology	2C Area	6500
Barber Shop	GA-11	5453/5454
Bereavement Counseling	3E(Chaplain)	5455
Cardiology	2nd FI Suite E	6776
Central Files	GC-09	5625/5626
Comp/Pension Exam	1st FI Suite A	5278/5279
Correspondence	GC-24	5629/5630
Coumadin	2nd FI Suite E	5276
Decedent Affairs	9A-06	4686
Dermatology	3rd FI Suite H	5289
Dental	2C Area	6460/6462
Diabetes	2nd FI Suite E	5653
Diabetic Foot	3 rd FI Suite I	5372/3
Dialysis	9A Area	6633/6636
Ear, Nose, Throat	2 nd FI Suite G	5654/3654
EEG Lab	6A-40	6842
Eligibility	1 st FI Suite C	5353
Emergency Room	1C Area	5255
Endocrine/Metabolic	2 nd FI Suite E	5653
Eye	2C -19	6482/6483
Gastroenterology/GI	2nd FI Suite F	5041/3600
Gastro. Endoscopy/GI	2D-48	6687
General Surgery	2nd FI Suite F	5041/3600
Geriatric Medicine	2nd FI Suite G	3654/5654
Geriatric Psychiatry	3B Area	5237/5706
GU Injection	1C-13	3834/5359
Gynecology	1st FI Suite A	4625
Hematology/Oncology	3rd FI Suite	6669
Homeless/CWT Program	3A-06	6847
Hypertension	2nd FI Suite E	5653
Hypertension Research	7A -33	6822
Infectious Disease/ID	3rd FI Suite J	5842
Liver Function	5B-31	5856/5857
Lost & Found (VA Police)	1C-01D	5377
Metabolic/Lipid	2nd FI Suite E	5653
MRI	GC Area	5584
Medical/Surgery PCC	7A-14	6753/6754
New I.D. Cards	1st FI Suite C	5353
Neurology	7A Area	6803/6804
Notary Public	1st FI Suite C	5317
Nuclear Medicine	2A-11	6349
Nutrition Clinic	2C-165	5896

Operative Care Center	2E-22	5277/6206
Orthopedics	3rd FI Suite I	5372/5373
Pain Clinic	2E-22	5277/6206
Patient Travel	1C-06	5323/5324
Plastic Surgery	2 nd FI Suite F	5041/3600
Podiatry	3rd FI Suite I	5372/5373
Psychiatry	3B Area	5237/5706
PTSD	Bldg 107	5881
Pulmonary	2 nd FI Suite G	3654/5654
Radiology	2D Area	6533
Rectal	2 nd FI Suite F	5041/3600
Rehab	3D-10	5080/6581
Renal	3 rd FI Suite J	5842
Rheumatology (Arthritis)	2nd FI Suite G	3654/5654
Smoking Cessation	3B-72	5172
Social Worker (Brooks)	1C-34	5942
Social Worker (Bradley)	2C-180	5339
Specialty Nutrition	3rd FI Suite H	5289
Speech	7A Area	6803
Substance Abuse Svcs.	5B Area	6957/6958
Una Boot	2 nd FI Suite F	5041/3600
Urgent Care	1C Area	5315/5316
Urology/GU	1C-18	5359
VA Police	1C-01D	5377
Vascular Surgery	2 nd FI Suite F	5041/3600
Women's Health	1st FI Suite A	4625